

Addendum – SEND Policy 2021 – COVID 19 Response

The SEND Policy addendum is in response to Government guidance and Local Authority advice in respect of COVID-19. This addendum will be updated, as needed, in line with Local Authority and National guidance regarding the COVID-19 outbreak. It is to be used in conjunction with, and read alongside, the SEND policy.

In response to COVID-19, all schools, including St Mary's Catholic Primary School, have been ordered to remain open to provide education for the children of key workers, 'vulnerable children'. Those deemed to be 'vulnerable' as per the Department for Education's (DfE's) definition of 'vulnerable children' includes those who:

- Have a social worker
- Have a child protection plan
- Assessed as being in need
- Looked after by the local authority
- Have an education, health and care (EHC) plan

Pupils with EHC Plans

Due to the unprecedented circumstances presented by the coronavirus outbreak, the duty to secure the special educational provision specified in EHC plans may need to be temporarily modified so that educational settings can carry out the provision. In providing education in school during this period, the school must have regard for multiple factors, and act in the widest interests of pupils and staff in reducing risk and meeting needs with the resources available. This may affect the degree and consistency of provision over time including:

- Targets may need to be amended or reviewed as appropriate (new targets may reference social distancing and hygiene routines).
- Where access to therapeutic services is limited, provision may need to be delivered remotely for example via video link.
- School may provide guidance and support for those students who may find the new routines and expectations challenging (this may include social distancing, hygiene, seating and/or safe space provision, EXIT arrangements)
- Appropriate signage and visual prompts
- Adjustments to individual timetables if needed.
- Group and/or individual interventions delivered in school may be limited or cancelled until staff can deliver these safely.

For those pupils learning remotely with EHC Plans we will provide the following support:

- Weekly phone calls, which are logged. In the calls we will address areas which need further support where possible.
- Highly differentiated work
- Support area (Hive) where parents and pupils can access information and resources linked to the four areas of learning, some of which are linked to the pupils EHC plan provision.
- One live lesson a day
- Catch up sessions where necessary.

EHCP Annual Reviews

It is recognised that with current social distancing restrictions and partial school closures remaining in place, there is a need for schools to facilitate forthcoming EHC meetings reviews differently. Wherever possible parents and young people are offered the choice of how they would prefer the EHC review to be managed. This may take the form of:

- Telephone conversations
- Virtual meetings
- Use of email to share reports

The SENCo will complete the first section of the annual review paperwork and will seek teacher feedback and the views of other professionals working with the young person. Parent's will also be asked to complete a 'Family Views' form which will contribute towards the review. The review paperwork will be shared with the parent who will then be invited to indicate if they would like to follow this up with a virtual meeting (video/ telephone).

New EHC Needs Assessment Requests

Requests for the assessment of children and young people's education, health and care needs can be submitted via the usual routes. Decision making on whether to proceed to an EHC needs assessment and whether to issue an EHC plan will continue remotely through Family Services. Decisions will continue to be communicated to parents, young people and schools through telephone calls and formal decision letters.

The School will continue to monitor Government and Local Authority guidance. Changes to provision may need to be addressed at short notice and without further consultation.